

*For Immediate Release: March 15, 2021*  
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## North Carolina’s January Employment Figures Released

**RALEIGH** — The state’s seasonally adjusted January unemployment rate was 5.9 percent, declining 0.2 points from December’s revised rate. The national rate declined 0.4 points to 6.3 percent.

North Carolina’s January 2021 unemployment rate increased 2.4 percentage points from a year ago. The number of people employed increased 9,882 over the month to 4,741,046 and decreased 187,402 over the year. The number of people unemployed decreased 11,284 over the month to 297,599 and increased 117,994 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, decreased 3,200 to 4,432,600 in January. Major industries experiencing increases were Construction, 1,200; Information, 1,200; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 700; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 400; Other Services, 200; and Professional & Business Services, 100. Major industries experiencing decreases were Education & Health Services, 2,900; Government, 1,600; Financial Activities, 1,400; and Manufacturing, 1,100. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged.

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates since January 2020

	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020	Apr 2020	May 2020	Jun 2020	Jul 2020	Aug 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021
<b>N.C.</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.9</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>

*Please note: 2020 numbers have undergone annual revision*

Since January 2020, Total Nonfarm jobs decreased 190,900 with the Total Private sector decreasing by 153,400 and Government decreasing by 37,500. Major industries experiencing increases were Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 3,400; Professional & Business Services, 2,400; and Financial Activities, 1,000. Major industries experiencing decreases were Leisure & Hospitality Services, 87,200; Education & Health Services, 38,400; Government, 37,500; Manufacturing, 18,900; Other Services, 12,100; Construction, 2,800; Information, 700; and Mining & Logging, 100.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Friday, March 19, 2021 when the county unemployment rates for January 2021 will be released.

These data can be accessed on the Commerce website at <https://d4.nccommerce.com/>

**North Carolina Department of Commerce**  
**Labor and Economic Analysis Division**  
**NORTH CAROLINA and U.S. LABOR FORCE DATA**

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M. Monday, March 15, 2021*

	January 2021	December 2020	January 2020	Month Ago		Year Ago	
				Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Local Area Unemployment Statistics)</i>							
<b>Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	5,038,645	5,040,047	5,108,053	-1,402	> -0.1	-69,408	-1.4
<b>Employed</b>	4,741,046	4,731,164	4,928,448	9,882	0.2	-187,402	-3.8
<b>Unemployed</b>	297,599	308,883	179,605	-11,284	-3.7	117,994	65.7
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	5.9	6.1	3.5	-0.2	xxx	2.4	xxx
<b>Not Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	4,971,267	5,017,316	5,072,275	-46,049	-0.9	-101,008	-2.0
<b>Employed</b>	4,674,598	4,710,183	4,887,316	-35,585	-0.8	-212,718	-4.4
<b>Unemployed</b>	296,669	307,133	184,959	-10,464	-3.4	111,710	60.4
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	6.0	6.1	3.6	-0.1	xxx	2.4	xxx
<b>United States</b> <i>(Current Population Survey)</i>							
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	160,161,000	160,567,000	164,455,000	-406,000	-0.3	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	150,031,000	149,830,000	158,659,000	201,000	0.1	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	10,130,000	10,736,000	5,796,000	-606,000	-5.6	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	6.3	6.7	3.5	-0.4	xxx	xxx	xxx
<b>Not Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	159,234,000	160,017,000	163,497,000	-783,000	-0.5	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	148,383,000	149,613,000	156,994,000	-1,230,000	-0.8	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	10,851,000	10,404,000	6,504,000	447,000	4.3	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	6.8	6.5	4.0	0.3	xxx	xxx	xxx

Effective January 2021, updated US population estimates are used in the national labor force estimates. The annual population adjustments affect the comparability of national labor force estimates over time.

2021 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision. 2020 estimates have undergone annual revision.

# North Carolina Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Division NORTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT DATA

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				Month Ago		Year Ago	
	January 2021	December 2020	January 2020	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
<b>North Carolina (Current Employment Statistics)</b>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Total Nonfarm	4,432,600	4,435,800	4,623,500	-3,200	-0.1	-190,900	-4.1
Total Private	3,732,500	3,734,100	3,885,900	-1,600	> -0.1	-153,400	-3.9
Mining & Logging	5,600	5,600	5,700	0	0.0	-100	-1.8
Construction	231,900	230,700	234,700	1,200	0.5	-2,800	-1.2
Manufacturing	456,600	457,700	475,500	-1,100	-0.2	-18,900	-4.0
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	861,600	861,200	858,200	400	< 0.1	3,400	0.4
Information	75,400	74,200	76,100	1,200	1.6	-700	-0.9
Financial Activities	257,500	258,900	256,500	-1,400	-0.5	1,000	0.4
Professional & Business Services	657,400	657,300	655,000	100	< 0.1	2,400	0.4
Education & Health Services	594,900	597,800	633,300	-2,900	-0.5	-38,400	-6.1
Leisure & Hospitality Services	434,600	433,900	521,800	700	0.2	-87,200	-16.7
Other Services	157,000	156,800	169,100	200	0.1	-12,100	-7.2
Government	700,100	701,700	737,600	-1,600	-0.2	-37,500	-5.1
<b>North Carolina (Current Employment Statistics)</b>							
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Total Nonfarm	4,389,800	4,472,400	4,579,000	-82,600	-1.8	-189,200	-4.1
Total Private	3,681,400	3,752,100	3,832,200	-70,700	-1.9	-150,800	-3.9
Mining & Logging	5,600	5,600	5,700	0	0.0	-100	-1.8
Construction	225,800	230,800	229,600	-5,000	-2.2	-3,800	-1.7
Manufacturing	456,300	460,400	473,400	-4,100	-0.9	-17,100	-3.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	855,800	884,200	852,400	-28,400	-3.2	3,400	0.4
Information	75,900	74,900	75,600	1,000	1.3	300	0.4
Financial Activities	254,500	259,200	254,200	-4,700	-1.8	300	0.1
Professional & Business Services	650,500	658,500	646,800	-8,000	-1.2	3,700	0.6
Education & Health Services	591,200	601,700	630,300	-10,500	-1.7	-39,100	-6.2
Leisure & Hospitality Services	410,500	420,800	496,800	-10,300	-2.4	-86,300	-17.4
Other Services	155,300	156,000	167,400	-700	-0.4	-12,100	-7.2
Government	708,400	720,300	746,800	-11,900	-1.7	-38,400	-5.1

2021 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision.  
2020 estimates have undergone annual revision.  
Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

## **Accessing Data**

The data presented in this press release, as well as historical data, can be accessed from NC Commerce's Demand Driven Data Delivery ("D4") system:

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/LausSelection.aspx>

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/CesSelection.aspx>

## **Technical Notes**

This release presents labor force and unemployment estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Also presented are nonfarm payroll employment estimates from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The LAUS and CES programs are both federal-state cooperative endeavors.

### **Labor force and unemployment--from the LAUS program**

**Definitions.** The labor force and unemployment estimates are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as bad weather, labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on lay-off expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

**Method of estimation.** Statewide estimates are produced using an estimation algorithm administered by the BLS. This method, which underwent substantial enhancement at the beginning of 2015, utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the CES, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals, and state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Substate estimates are controlled to their respective state totals. For more information about LAUS estimation procedures, see the BLS website at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/lau/calculation.htm>

**Revisions.** Labor force and unemployment data for the previous month reflect adjustments made in each subsequent month, while data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The monthly revisions incorporate updated model inputs, while the annually revised estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates.

Seasonal adjustment. The LAUS program introduced smoothed seasonally adjusted (SSA) estimates in January 2010. These are seasonally-adjusted data that have incorporated a long-run trend smoothing procedure, resulting in estimates that are less volatile than those previously produced. The estimates are smoothed using a filtering procedure, based on moving averages, to remove the irregular fluctuations from the seasonally-adjusted series, leaving the trend. The same process is used on both historical and current year estimates. For more information about the smoothing technique, see the BLS website at <https://www.bls.gov/lau/lauseas.htm>.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations that were issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on April 10, 2018. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm).

### Employment--from the CES program

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a "weighted link relative" estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month's employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, relatively small sample sizes limit the reliability of the weighted link-relative estimates. In these cases, BLS uses the CES small domain model (SDM) to generate employment estimates. The SDM combines the direct sample estimates (described above) and forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease the volatility of the estimates. For more detailed information about the CES small domain model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months. Information on recent benchmark revisions is available online at [www.bls.gov/web/lau/benchmark.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/web/lau/benchmark.pdf).

Seasonal adjustment. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted at the statewide supersector level. In some states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is computed by aggregating the independently adjusted supersector series. In other states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is independently adjusted. Revisions of historical data for the most recent 5 years are made once a year, coincident with annual benchmark adjustments.

### Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used. Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes to LAUS estimates are available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm). Measures of sampling error for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector levels are available online at [www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm).

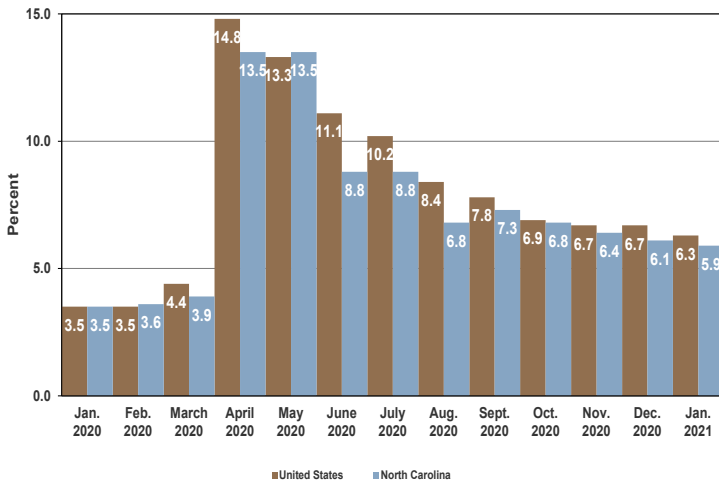
### Release Dates

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Friday, March 19, 2021 when the county unemployment rates for January 2021 will be released.

The complete data release schedule for 2021 can be accessed here:

<https://www.nccommerce.com/documents/release-dates-unemployment-rates>

## United States/North Carolina Unemployment Rates January 2020–January 2021 (Seasonally Adjusted)



The North Carolina seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.9 percent in January, decreasing 0.2 of a percentage point from December's revised rate and growing 2.4 percentage points from January 2020. Over the month, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 11,284 (3.7%). The civilian labor force fell by 1,402 (>-0.1%) to 5,038,645.

Nationally, January's unemployment rate was 6.3 percent. The number of persons unemployed was 10,130,000, while the civilian labor force was 160,161,000.

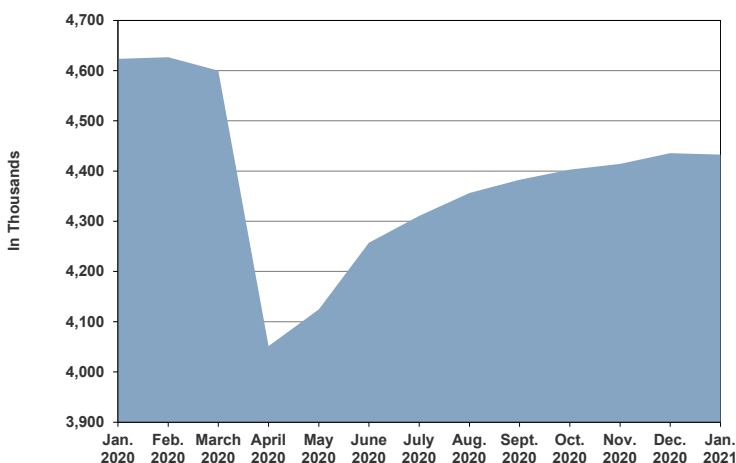
Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment (4,432,600) decreased 3,200 (0.1%) since December 2020 and fell 190,900 (4.1%) since January 2020. Private sector employment decreased 1,600 (>-0.1%) over the month and decreased 153,400 (3.9%) over the year.

Of the major industries for which payroll data are seasonally adjusted, Information (1,200; 1.6%) and Construction (1,200; 0.5%) had the largest over-the-month increase in jobs, followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services (700; 0.2%), Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (400; <0.1%), Other Services (200; 0.1%), and Professional & Business Services (100; <0.1%). Education & Health Services (2,900; 0.5%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Government (1,600; 0.2%), Financial Activities (1,400; 0.5%), and Manufacturing (1,100; 0.2%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged over the month.

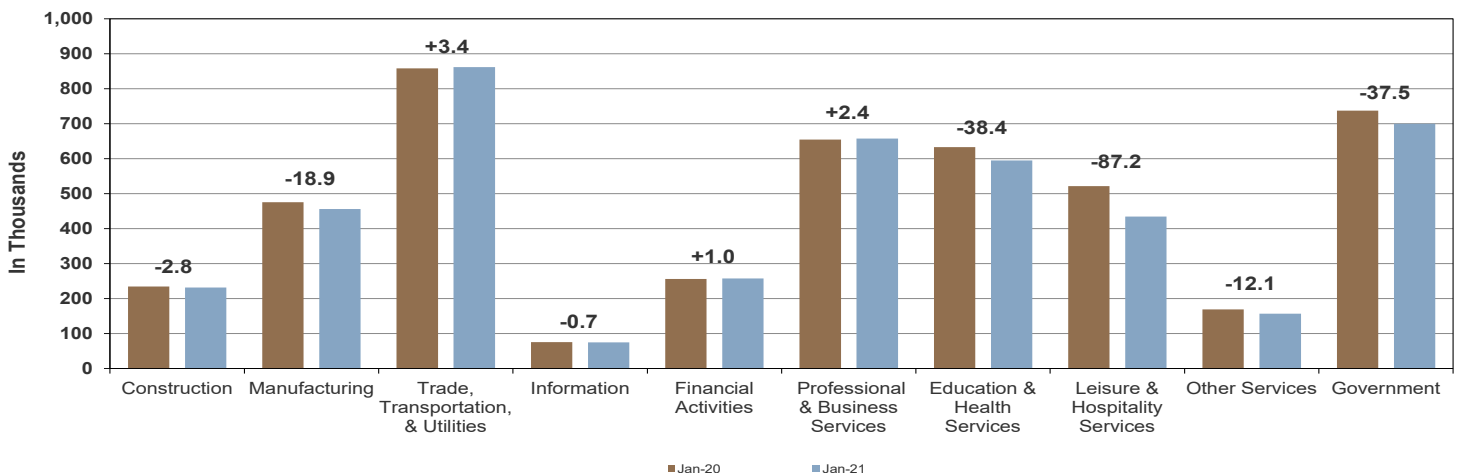
Since January 2020, Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (3,400; 0.4%) reported the largest jobs increase over the year, followed by Professional & Business Services (2,400; 0.4%), and Financial Activities (1,000; 0.4%). Leisure & Hospitality Services (87,200; 16.7%) reported the largest over-the-year decrease, followed by Education & Health Services (38,400; 6.1%), Government (37,500; 5.1%), Manufacturing (18,900; 4.0%), Other Services (12,100; 7.2%), Construction (2,800; 1.2%), Information (700; 0.9%), and Mining & Logging (100; 1.8%).

Note: It is important to note that industry employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns. Seasonal adjustment factors are applied to the data. However, these factors may not be fully capturing the seasonal trend. Therefore, when interpreting the changes in industry employment, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in both the seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted series.

## North Carolina Total Nonfarm Employment January 2020–January 2021 (Seasonally Adjusted)



## Changes in Employment by NAICS Industries January 2020 Compared to January 2021 (Seasonally Adjusted)



Note: North Carolina 2021 current month estimates are preliminary, while all other data have undergone annual revision.

# North Carolina Labor Market Conditions

The January 2021 not seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment level of 4,389,800 was 82,600 (1.8%) lower than the December 2020 not seasonally adjusted employment level of 4,472,400. Among the major industries in North Carolina, Information had the only over-the-month increase in employment at 1,000 (1.3%). Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (28,400; 3.2%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Government (11,900; 1.7%), Education & Health Services (10,500; 1.7%), Leisure & Hospitality Services (10,300; 2.4%), Professional & Business Services (8,000; 1.2%), Construction (5,000; 2.2%), Financial Activities (4,700; 1.8%), Manufacturing (4,100; 0.9%), and Other Services (700; 0.4%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged over the month.

Over the year, the Service Providing sector (all industries except Mining & Logging, Construction, and Manufacturing) showed a decrease of 168,200 (4.3%) jobs. Professional & Business Services (3,700; 0.6%) reported the largest increase over the year, followed by Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (3,400; 0.4%), Information (300; 0.4%) and Financial Activities (300; 0.1%). Leisure & Hospitality Services had the largest over-the-year decrease in employment at 86,300 (17.4%), followed by Education & Health Services (39,100; 6.2%), Government (38,400; 5.1%), and Other Services (12,100; 7.2%).

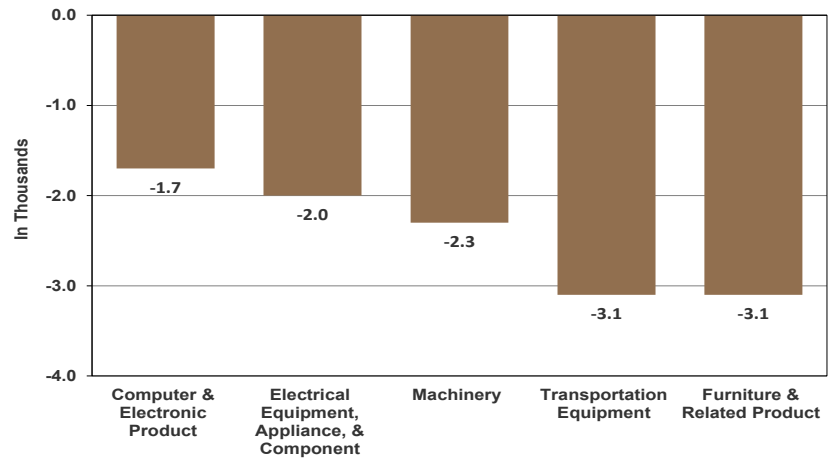
The Goods Producing sector decreased by 21,000 (3.0%) jobs over the year. Manufacturing had the largest decrease with 17,100 (3.6%), followed by Construction (3,800; 1.7%) and Mining & Logging (100; 1.8%).

Amongst manufacturing industries, Chemical had the only net over-the-year increase of 900 jobs. Furniture & Related Product and Transportation Equipment each had the largest net over-the-year decline with the loss of 3,100 jobs. Other manufacturing industries with decreases were: Machinery, 2,300; Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component, 2,000; Computer & Electronic Product, 1,700; Textile Mills, 1,600; Apparel, 1,000; Fabricated Metal Product, 1,000; Printing & Related Support Activities, 900; Wood Product, 800; Plastics & Rubber Products, 500; Textile Product Mills, 500; and Beverage & Tobacco Product, 300. Food remained unchanged over the year.

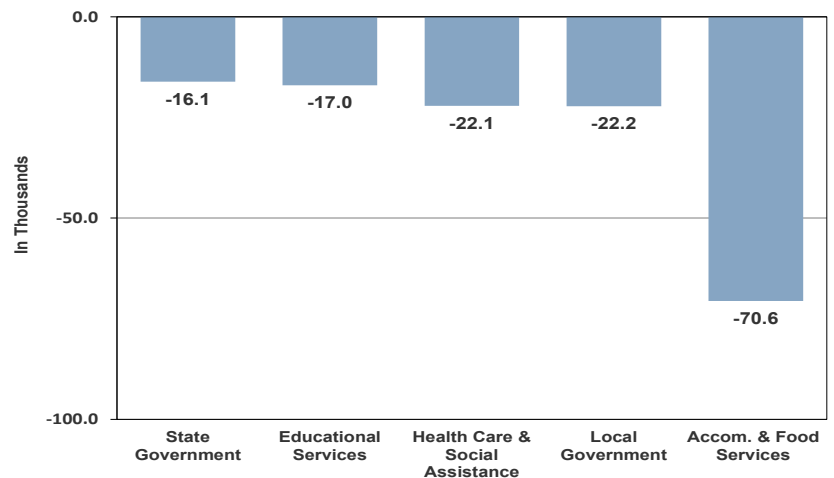
Over the month, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in January decreased 12 minutes to 34.6 from December's revised rate of 34.8. Average Hourly Earnings increased by \$0.01 to \$27.26, and Average Weekly Earnings decreased by \$5.10 to \$943.20.

Over the year, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in January increased 48 minutes from the January 2020 rate of 33.8. Average Hourly Earnings grew by \$1.36 and Average Weekly Earnings increased by \$67.78.

## Selected Manufacturing Industries With Job Losses January 2020–January 2021 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



## Selected Service Industries With Job Losses January 2020–January 2021 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



## Total Private Average Weekly Wage January 2018–January 2021 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

